



The Chronicle Workshop: A participatory method for evaluating organizational

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Title:

The Chronicle Workshop: A participatory method for evaluating organizational interventions and outcomes

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In the intervention literature it is recommended that organizational level interventions are evaluated by the participants. The evaluation should include asking the participants about the intervention process and the intervention context.

The Chronicle Workshop was introduced in an intervention study in order to evaluate the intervention from the employee perspective. The Chronicle Workshop is primarily used as an exploratory method for developing an understanding of an organization before a change process is implemented. The aim is to gain an understanding of relevant developments in an organization by looking several years back and get insight in the effects and causes. In the intervention study the Chronicle Workshop has been applied as a mean of evaluating an intervention process and to gain knowledge about the positive and negative aspects of the intervention.

The Chronicle Workshop was carried out in four small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in a participatory organizational intervention study. Four to six employees participated in each workshop. The participants had all participated in the intervention but they did not play a particular role in the process.

There are three rounds in the Chronicle Workshop and the final outcome of the workshop is a timeline dating important events and developments. In each round the participants are asked to answer a question by writing the answers on paper. The questions for the three rounds are:

- 1) What important events have happened during the last six months?
- 2) What important changes have you experienced with respect to change 1 and change 2? (Change 1 and change 2 relates to the two changes the company has focused on during the intervention)
- 3) What work conditions influenced the implemented changes?

The participants are asked not to talk with the other participants when answering the questions, in order to get their individual perspectives on the intervention. Each round ends with the workshop facilitator collecting all answers.

In the specific case the method illustrated that in multi-level participatory interventions in SMEs specific gains like improved management, improved project management, more cooperation, improved tone, and improved knowledge sharing are achievable. The method also revealed that the conditions and persons that affected the intervention negatively were the daily operations and extreme busyness and positively, allocated time, the facilitators and managers.

The method can thus be a helpful tool in order to understand how to make a sustainable intervention.